

December 10, 1979

Summary of Inspection: Curtin Matheson Scientific, Elk Grove Village, IL.

As a result of allegations made by a former warehouse employee that Curtin Matheson Scientific (Elk Grove Village, IL) disposed of chemicals by dumping in a vacant lot on company property east of their warehouse, I inspected the firm on December 6, 1979.

I obtained maps from the Elk Grove Village Department of Public Works (666 Landmeir Rd.) showing locations of storm sewers, sanitary sewers, and village water wells in the vicinity of the firm. The nearest well is at 1751 Greenleaf, which is about 800 feet westsouthwest of the firm. That well is 1400 feet deep. An extensive storm water drainage system intercepts all runoff in the area, which is a fully developed industrial park. Sanitary sewer laterals in the area connect to an interceptor on Busse Road, which runs north to Oakton, then easterly into the Chicago sewer system. Elk Grove Village has no POTW. On the day of the inspection it was clear and cold (30° - 40°F). There was no snow cover.

I questioned the warehouse manager, Mr. George Surette, about the disposal of damaged, unsaleable chemicals. He said they were simply put aside until there was enough to haul away, but did not know where they were taken. He said he had only been employed there for 3 or 4 months, so did not have any knowledge of the improper disposal alleged by Mr. Clausen. Mr. Surette referred me to his supervisor, Mr. Tony Weinhammer, Operations Manager. Mr. Weinhammer has been at the firm about a year and a half. He said that "some time ago" they used to dump some things in the vacant lot, but they had discontinued that practice when the fire department said to quit it. Apparently there had been a fire resulting from the disposal of an oxidant. Mr. Weinhammer said that now chemicals which are unsaleable are donated to a Catholic high school if the school can use them. If not, the chemicals are hauled away by a metal plating company.

The non-hazardous waste is removed by Arc Disposal Co. (Rosemont, IL, 823-3026). Arc Disposal will not accept any chemical waste. I checked the two trash bins with their name on them and found only paper and cardboard. The only other wastes apparent were nitric acid, which was set apart from the trash and marked for donation, and about 20 five gallon containers of ISOTON II (a buffered diluent for blood cell counting). The ISOTON II, which is non-hazardous, is returned to the manufacturer for salvage.

I walked completely around the outside of the facility, the storage and shipping areas. The premises were generally clean. Except for 2 old plastic containers (without labels) along the north side of the building, there was no trash or evidence of dumping. There was lawn along the south and west sides of the building. There were weeds along the north and east sides, except for the paved loading area and employee parking lot. If any phytotoxic chemicals were ever dumped around the building, no effects were seen during my inspection.

Conclusion and recommendation.

No physical evidence of open dumping alleged by the informant was found during this inspection. The disposal procedures described by the firm's manager do not appear to violate RCRA. In view of the fact that the incidents alleged by the informant took place about a year ago, it is unlikely that we could uncover hard evidence to support the allegations at this time. For this reason, I recommend that no further actions be taken on this complaint.


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